

The Musical World.

(REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.)

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1872.

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"We must not omit to mention a song entitled 'The Mariner' which is an excellent composition, by Louis Diehl. It was well executed by Signor Foli, and was encored as much for the beauty of the composition, as the excellence of the singing."—*The Observer*.

"Signor Foli obtained an encore for a capital song, 'The Mariner,' by Herr Louis Diehl."—*The Graphic*.

"Signor Foli sang Herr Diehl's new song 'The Mariner' (at the Philharmonic Concert, Liverpool). It is an excellent and spirited piece of music, and was encored."—*Liverpool Courier*.

"Signor Foli has proved himself worthy of the title of best or bass singers known in this country. In every piece he sang he was at once the man of superb natural gift and admirable power of interpretation; but it was in the very genuine song of 'The Mariner'—a piece of music and sentiment peculiarly well suited to his powers—that his rich, deep, strong basso and hearty delivery told with most success. It was very heartily applauded and encored."—*Cork Examiner*.

"The manner in which Signor Foli sang Diehl's new song, 'The Mariner,' elicited immense applause; and though the Signor appeared twice on the platform to bow his acknowledgments, the audience would not be content, and he eventually responded to their demands."—*The Nottingham Journal*, Saturday, January 20th, 1872.

"The new song, 'The Diehl,' which Signor Foli introduced at a later hour, possesses every element of wide popularity, including, of course, conventional; and as it was really well sung, its re-demand, which was not complied with, was only natural."—*Birmingham Daily Post*, Thursday, January 18, 1872.

"In Diehl's song of 'The Mariner,' Signor Foli fairly brought down the house."—*Belfast Daily Telegraph*, January 13th, 1872.

"Signor Foli sang the song, 'The Mariner,' in such a manner that he was obliged to repeat it, the audience forgetting his indisposition in their enthusiasm."—*Belfast Times*, January 13th, 1872.

"A new song, 'The Mariner,' was introduced by Signor Foli, who achieved an unqualified success. The execution and manner were so well adapted to the music and words (both of a high character), that the singer fairly won the hearts of his hearers, but the well-merited encore was courteously but firmly declined. We have to thank Signor Foli for introducing this song to our notice: it will form a very pleasing addition to the repertoire of every baritone."—*Derby Mercury*, January 24th.

"A vigorous attempt was made to encore Signor Foli in a capital new song, 'The Mariner,' by Diehl, but without success."—*Bath Chronicle*, February 1.

"In the second part, Signor Foli gave 'The Mariner,' a new song, which is likely to become as favourite a piece as 'The Village Blacksmith.' So far as demonstrative public favour is concerned, Signor Foli carried away the honours of the night, for the encore which followed 'The Mariner' was a thorough storm. The Signor was literally taken by storm, too, for three times bowing of acknowledgment, with a shake of the head, meant to be a decisive negating of the re-demand, would not satisfy the audience, and at last another song was elicited."—*Staffordshire Sentinel*, January 27th.

"The piece which secured Signor Foli most applause was Diehl's 'Mariner.' This called forth such loud and prolonged applause that he was compelled to repeat it—two re-appearances on the stage, in response to the recall, being insufficient to satisfy the audience."—*Cardiff Times*, February 3rd.

"The new song, 'The Mariner,' was vociferously re-demanded. Signor Foli declined the honour of a recall, but after twice bowing his acknowledgments, the clamour, in which some part of the audience chose to indulge forced from him another song."—*Bradford Observer*, January 29th.

"Signor Foli's powerful and rich voice was heard to great advantage in 'The Mariner,' which elicited an encore."—*Leeds Mercury*, January 25th.

"In 'The Mariner,' a new song by Diehl, Signor Foli so gratified his audiences that he was recalled three times, and eventually yielded to the encore."—*Nottingham Daily Guardian*, Saturday, January 20th, 1872.

COMPETITIVE TRIALS BETWEEN THE VOCAL ASSOCIATIONS OF MALE VOICES IN BELGIUM, AND THE "CONCOURS INTERNATIONAL," AT Verviers, ON THE 7TH JULY, 1872.*

By DR. FERDINAND HILLER.

Notwithstanding the cosmopolitan accomplishments by virtue of which this grand Germany of ours surveys every day the globe, and buries itself in the state of civilization before the "creation of the world," besides reading and translating the novels of all nations, it possesses, as a rule, very little precise information of what is going forward on the other side of the nearest frontier-station. It is too much taken up with itself and its own peculiar interests. Not to go beyond my "last"—how little are our musical circles acquainted with the musical doings of our English, French, Belgian, and Italian neighbours. They know something about certain large theatres, concert-societies, &c., but, precisely at the point where the more intimate connection between art and national life, properly speaking, commences, their ignorance of what is done begins.

Male choral singing has, for a considerable time, played a great part in Germany. Its influence has been more superficial than profound; more of a social bond than an artistic stimulus. Many a magnificent song has been admirably sung, but as a rule there have been more bad songs than good ones, and they have been sung badly rather than well. At grand Vocal Festivals, beer and patriotism have been equally prominent—fortunately without any injury to our national prosperity. If the charge which we often bring against ourselves is well-founded, namely: that we are deficient in self-consciousness, we may give the Vocal Societies, Vocal Clubs, and Vocal Unions, the Polyhymnia, Cecilia, and Concordia Associations credit for forming excellent schools to cure the defect. As members of such an association, the simplest and most modest individuals are certainly not less proud than is an English peer of his hereditary right to take part in the government of the United Kingdom. They have even had their historiographers, whose duty it has been to see that not one serenade, trip, or greeting connected with them should be lost to posterity. As a rule, however, and despite numerous very, very honourable exceptions, one was obliged to say: "Much cry and little—music."

But I am allowing myself to indulge in evil backbiting of my dear fellow-countrymen and colleagues, a plan that may lead to no music, but to a great deal of uproar, and—not the slightest amount of wool. Yet my purpose was to speak about the "Kampfeswagen der Gesänge," "The jousts and tournaments of song" among our neighbours!

I was invited thereto by a "grand international competition," got up at Verviers, on the 7th July, by the Royal Society called *L'Emulation*. I attended as one of the judges. I had previously often been thus distinguished, as, for instance, at Antwerp, Liège, Namur, etc., probably because the Belgians have not to go far to find me. But I was, also, charged with the task of writing an "obligatory chorus," a *chœur imposé*, and thanks, thereto, enjoyed the unusual treat of hearing a new work (the Psalm: "Super Flumina Babylonis") without having to go through any horrible rehearsals.

These vocal contests play a great part in Belgium. It would be difficult to find a national festival of which they do not constitute a feature, while the number of those got up without any extraneous object may be termed considerable. They are divided into various categories, with the *International* competitions at their head. The arrangements have been so developed in course of time that, in all their principal points, they may be regarded as permanent.

A corporation, or a Vocal Association, under its auspices, undertakes to get up a competition, or match. This may be open simply to one province, or a number of parishes and towns; it may stretch over the entire kingdom; or, lastly, all the nations on the face of the globe may be invited to take part in it. In the last case, as far as I know at least, only Rhinelanders, Dutch, and French from the frontier provinces, have hitherto appeared. They have carried off several high prizes. It was here that our own celebrated Choral Association for Male Voices won its first

victories. These encouraged it to undertake its well-known, and so highly successful, journey to Great Britain.

The prizes consisting, partly of "Indemnités," as they are called, partly of gold medals, partly of valuable works of art, etc., are contributed from various quarters. In nearly all cases, we find a present from the King, and there is frequently a contribution from the Ministry; for Belgium, in proportion to its size, certainly spends more on art than any other state. The town in which the festival is kept, the local societies, and some few private persons do their best. Thus I find that, on the occasion of the last vocal match at Verviers, at least 14 valuable medals (worth as much as 500 francs), are mentioned as being given by seven or nine associations, some of which (I may mention the Club Gymnastique, and the Société du Manège), are but very distantly connected with music—a proof of the deep interest taken in the subject. Special mention must be made of the present given by the Cercle des Artisans, and of a gold crown added to the first prize by the ladies of the town. Several months before the day of the match the announcements and invitations are made public, the different associations having to signify eight or ten weeks beforehand their intention of taking part in the proceedings. I must here touch upon a point which is interesting to all, but more especially to musicians. First-class competing societies are bound to sing the same composition, and it is sent them four or five weeks before the meeting. The compositions intended for this purpose must be new. The composers selected to supply them willingly undertake the task as a question of honour, which, however, is not untended with material profit. The associations, compelled to master the same thing in the same time, thus contend on equal terms.

To form the board of arbitrators, invitations are issued to a smaller or larger number, as the case may be, of musicians of repute, who are always treated with the most gracious and splendid hospitality. They are formed into various sections, because at the larger meetings the competitors are *singing-matching* it in several places at once. Under these circumstances you frequently meet old friends again, and pass some exceedingly charming hours of good-natured gaiety with your colleagues, though the office of arbitrator itself has its serious aspects and its moments of exhaustion. At Verviers there were more than twenty *Minoses* assembled, including one Dutchman (our old friend Verhulst), and several of our Rhenish colleagues.

A summary of the arrangements at this festival will be the speediest means of conveying a notion how the majority of such meetings are organized. 1. The third division for Belgians: associations from parishes containing less than 7,000 inhabitants. 2. The second division for Belgians: associations from towns of from 7,000 to 18,000 inhabitants. 3. The first division for the same: associations from towns of at least 18,000 inhabitants. 4. For foreigners: a second division for parishes and towns of less than 12,000 inhabitants. 5. For the same: a first division for cities of more than 12,000 inhabitants. 6. International contest for Belgian and foreign associations, already the possessors of a first prize. 7. An International contest of *Honour* (an innovation introduced, I believe, by the Verviers Committee), for associations which have already carried off a first class prize (*prix d'excellence*). The divisions named under 1, 2, 4, and 5, have to sing two pieces, both of their own selection. The divisions, on the contrary, included under 4, 6, and 7, have to sing one obligatory chorus, and one chosen by themselves, a new piece being composed for each of the divisions under each of these heads. In addition to some smaller localities, the Theatre, and the riding school, a magnificent building, with accommodation for some thousand persons, were fitted up for the occasion.

The conditions, under which these friendly contests take place, display the most conscientious desire to mete out even justice to all. The reproduction of them at length would occupy too much space. I may mention, however, that the vocal solos, which possess so great a charm for the public, do not at all affect the awards, and that the Jury, without any deliberation, vote secretly. The order to be observed by the associations singing in the same division is decided by lot.

I had no opportunity of hearing in Belgium those associations from whose performances no very great things were to be expected. In all probability they suffer, as we so frequently

* From the *Kölnische Zeitung*.

find the case among ourselves, from the unsuccessful imitation of the larger associations, which they are but too eager to out-do even in their "very hawking and spitting." The performances however, of such societies as are located in large towns, or, from peculiar circumstances, have more than a usually large number of members, and possess proper conductors, excel, as regards the *virtuosity* with which they execute the *most difficult* tasks, everything in this branch of art which it has fallen to my lot to hear in Germany. It is true that the tasks to be accomplished in the two countries are of an utterly different nature.

In our own country, male choral singing sprang from the love of convivial pleasures. To the joys which men transmitted, through their throats, inwardly to their bodies, were added those which, making their way through the throat outwardly, satisfied the needs of their souls. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh." The notion of singing in common our veneration of women and wine, our love for nature and our native land, so magnificently expressed in our unique lyric poetry, could not fail to exert an irresistible influence on a people for whom, in the majority of cases at least, music constitutes a piece of their lives. The song in strophes, which, generally speaking, constitutes the primitive basis of all vocal music, offered itself, both naturally and artistically, as the appropriate form. Through what phases it has passed during the present century; how it has wandered from the *Liedertafel* to the concert-room, how it was fated to have the honour of contributing to the manifestation of our national consciousness, as it grew more and more powerful; how male choral singing has, in many instances, been degraded to the level of mere ballad singing; and how, on the other hand, brought into connection with instrumental resources, by talented composers and active associations, it has been employed for higher artistic ends, might furnish materials for a not uninteresting octavo volume. That we can effect nothing with good-natured sentiment alone, we have frequently seen; and, unfortunately, the most glaring proof of this is supplied far too often by German male choral singing.

The contrasts of nationality, which, thank Heaven, are not abolished either by railways or steamboats, are most strikingly apparent when we come to consider male choral singing in Belgium as compared with male choral singing in Germany. Sprung, in the nature of things, from the French school of art, the dramatic, elocutionary, and, at times, even the outwardly pictorial, elements play the principal part in the former. Poems and compositions satisfying this tendency require, if they are to produce any sort of effect, a broader style of handling, and, from this fact alone, make greater demands upon the executants. But the Belgian and French composers who have cultivated this field of art have not been backward in presenting difficulties of another description as well. They do not shrink from the most daring runs, from the most surprising modulations—they write the chorus, five, six, or eight-part, and they require the most delicate treatment of the falsetto, rapid, and yet strongly marked enunciation of the words, and peculiar colouring in cases of sharp outline. In their endeavours to offer us something new and characteristic, they have allowed themselves to be led away into attempting to imitate instrumental effects, and so on, a course by no means worthy of imitation. But compositions such as *Les Emigrés Irlandais*, *Saul*, and others by that admirable musician, Gevaert; *Les Corsaires Grecs* by Soubre; the effective *Hymne à la Patrie*, written by Léon Jouvot, for Verviers, and many other compositions, require no such artifices. They need nothing but genuine choral art. When, moreover, we recollect that the most important performances take place at those Olympic Games, the prize singing-matches, we may easily form a notion of the energetic exertion to which singers and conductors may be impelled. It is impossible to dispose of the extraordinary performances springing hence by merely enquiring what was the number of rehearsals. The accomplishment of every artistic task requires time and industry. At the most, one would be entitled to step forward in opposition if what was *got off by heart* asserted itself at the expense of vitality. But this is by no means the case. To perfect technical skill, fine gradations of light and shade, and distinct enunciation, is added an amount of fire which borders on inspiration, and which simply carries the hearer away, no matter whether the ambition of gaining a prize plays as great

a part in the matter as the desire to do artistic justice to the subject.

Belgian artists complain, it is true, that the expenditure of strength leading to victory is followed by a long reaction of inactivity; nay, that associations, which have carried off all kinds of crowns, prefer resting upon their laurels to risking a defeat. But, then, fresh associations are continually being established, and stepping with all the fire of youth into the arena. As the principal object in view is competitive singing, we may truly say that what is lost *en détail* is gained *en gros*.

But there is one great step in advance which might be taken: apart from their competitive singing, some of the best associations might be induced to unite in the performance of some grand composition with orchestral accompaniment. As, in this case, it does not matter what time is spent in preparation, such compositions might be got up long beforehand, quietly and surely. The expense occasioned by the co-operation of an orchestra, and, perhaps, of a few soloists, would not be of any consideration in so rich and large-hearted a country as Belgium, and the warm suffrages of the public might be reckoned on with certainty. The interest with which the public follow the singing-matches is something indescribable. The better performances, and, still more, the best, are overwhelmed with applause, and the moment when the name of the conquering association is published is nothing short of a dramatic scene. The voting-papers are handed one after the other by the chairman of the jury to the secretary, who reads aloud their purport. There is a general and breathless silence, during which you feel that the public are silently counting the votes given to each of the competing associations. One of them has obtained a majority! Suddenly there bursts from the victorious singers a shout of joy which would have done honour to the Teutons of Tacitus, and it is only with difficulty that one can arrive at the announcement of the number of votes held back. If the arbitrators' verdict agrees with the feeling of the public, there is universal delight. But the contrary may, also, be the case; and then—why, then one sometimes gets a rather unpleasant specimen of the inconveniences and disagreeables of a highly democratic community. Fortunately, this case is of extremely rare occurrence.—The combination suggested above for the performance of more important vocal works, for male choruses, would also be the best preparatory step for something which is floating before the minds of the leading Belgian composers, who always took so much interest in our Rhenish Musical Festivals—the general co-operation of the female world of music in grand oratorio-dramatic works. In Germany, male choral singing has exercised in this respect a decidedly injurious effect, as the compositions to which it has principally devoted itself are, in the common sense of the word, more *entertaining*, but, both intellectually and technically, of less account than that demanded from the executants by works for mixed chorus. For the fact that, despite this, so much is effected, the reason must be sought in the indomitable and thoroughly musical nature of the Germans. In Belgium, the male choral singing which flourishes there would not act prejudicially on mixed choral singing—it would have to accomplish *other* tasks, but they would be by no means difficult.

One of the most gratifying phenomena at the singing-matches of our neighbours is the part, not simply active, but talented, taken in them by the labouring classes. The Orphéon from Brussels (under the zealous direction of M. Bauwens), carried off in the International Match at Verviers the second *prix d'excellence*. It numbers eighty members, and consists entirely of working men. The first prize in the above category was won by the Society of Amis Réunis of Jupille. M. Th. Piedbouf, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and a rich manufacturer, has, from among his workmen, and other persons variously employed, *formed*, in the best acceptance of the word, a chorus of 90 persons. At the Verviers meeting he conducted it personally, with immense fire and unmistakably great ability. The next day, on a tribune erected in the market-place, he received, amid our congratulations, a golden medal, coming from his Majesty, the King, and an indemnification of 1,000 francs, which in their immeasurable joy his chorus certainly did not require. All honour to such efforts, which far surpass what is regarded as acts of humanity, because the latter without the former would be impossible!

The first prize of honour was gained by the Liège society—La

Légia, under the direction of that talented musician, T. Radoux (brother of the Th. Radoux, who has rendered himself popular by the composition of a large number of pleasing songs). This Association, 137 strong, had scarcely to contend at all, for, in consequence of what was already known of its performances, all ideas of competing with it were abandoned by the other Belgian societies. It possesses the best qualities in abundance—the most admirable stuff, strength and power, together with that virtuoso-like finish attainable only by the most conscientious study, under a clever director, who is not merely a thorough musician, but specially accomplished vocally. I am glad, however, that I can here refer to the Cologne *Liederkrantz*, under the direction of Herr Lorscheidt, which had the boldness to enter the lists against La Légia, and came out with all honour from the dangerous undertaking. With acclamation, and unanimously, the jury awarded it the gold medal placed at their free disposal for any extraordinary case. The members of the Society L'Emulation, who got up the festival, which, thanks to their sensible and kindly care, had gone off so well, did not think that, in a musical sense, they ought to be merely dumb lookers-on: shut out by their own will from the competitive singing, properly so called, they had—in order, so to speak, to do the honours musically as well as otherwise—undertaken the difficult task of executing the two new pieces composed for the highest categories. They did so with such eminent merit that they nearly missed their friendly object by rendering it more difficult for the Associations which came after them to gain the due amount of appreciation. In praise of the conductor, Professor Th. Vercken, of Liège, I have merely to add that, until very lately, and for a great number of years, he was at the head of La Légia.

The town of Verviers was decked out during the Festival in the gayest colours; all the places in which singing was going on were crammed. In the Salle de l'Harmonie, the members of the board of arbitrators were invited to a really endless banquet, with the distinguished burgomaster, M. Ortmans-Hauzem, in the chair. I say *endless* banquet, because some of us did not stop for its end, but went and chatted for a few hours of the next day in the charming garden, which was splendidly illuminated. The distribution of the prizes took place on the morning in the grand square. Thousands of spectators filled all the windows, roofs, and adjoining streets. But the weather was sultry and oppressive during the entire proceedings—a fact arising from no moral grounds. The envious gods were sulking, because the amusements of mere mortals lasted too long, though they were civil enough to defer manifesting their displeasure till we had reached the protecting roof. Then the rain poured down in never-ceasing streams, washing away and overflowing everything, except the pleasant impressions which the Festival made on all taking part in it, and which at the present moment float around us as charming memories.

CRAMMINGS.

Cram, cram, cram, is the general order of our modern schoolmaster; the favourite mode of warfare used by him in fighting against that new born enemy, the competitive examiner. It is the "sling and stone" with which he arms the stripling youths that they may go forth and successfully encounter that dreaded giant who now stands sentinel at Fortune's gate, and blocks all ingress to the roads that lead to genteel or professional occupation. The art of cramming is a crafty accomplishment, for by it the professor transforms and reduces his stern proud judge—the competitive examiner—into his advertising agent; it turns his cursings into blessings. Occasionally, it forms well nigh all that preparation—miscellaneous education—which the poor scholar receives to fit him for life's duties; and it too often leaves him as empty as it found him, with also the painful consciousness of being a sham. In no branch of education is cramming more used than in music, an art so generally taught in our girls' schools. In spite of its universality it is rarely considered a serious occupation, or one that demands a conscientious course of treatment. To be able to play the tune or piece is the goal; no inquiry is made how the master has enabled the pupil to reach it. The proud parent, whilst hearing the daughter of his heart sing or play "Home, sweet home," stops not to inquire whether she is *parrot* taught. He drinks in the melody, which he has paid for as an extra, and feels it a certainty that it is an item of expenditure in which he has not been cheated. What cares he whether she knows her scales—her alphabet in music—he is contented to leave such things

as those for the study of poor music governesses; his child can sing and play, and nought is needed more. In ninety cases out of a hundred, however, that pretty singing and delicious playing are the results of cramming. The music master, either of his own choice, or in obedience to the principal, teaches tunes, not the art of music, starts from the end and not from the beginning.

If the young school girl has to cram for her holiday exhibition, how much more have singers to cram for their public performances? Why, in many instances they are only kept musically alive by periodical cramming. What is often a singer's history? At manhood he finds himself blessed with a fine voice, yet with absolutely no education in music, and ignorant even of its very rudiments. The precious, priceless gift of nature must be turned to immediate account; art education is expensive; he cannot afford to wait for years of training; to appear in public is a pressing necessity; he must live, although he may thereby devour the very seeds of future merit and success; so, before he knows even the alphabet of his art, he is "coached" in a few songs, with which, thanks to natural gifts, he makes himself famous. After once tasting popular applause he cannot make himself a child again. The drudgery of the elementary studies is too toilsome. At one leap he has bounded to the top of the ladder, and cannot descend to give himself the voluntary labour of again ascending painfully step by step. No, as he has done, so must he ever do: he must be crammed for every fresh effort; the singing master must ever drill him, and drive into his memory each new piece. Satire is ever ready with its gibes at the helplessness of such an individual: the cripple—especially if he be vain—is laughed at for his crutches; and many a singer is ridiculed and despised for his ignorance of an art that brings him fame and fortune. Yet there are fair apologies to be made for him. In his case, youth, the time for elementary studies, is past; poverty often forces immediate action; and, moreover, vocal training, under any circumstances, is not easily obtained in this country. With him, therefore, cramming is indispensable.

The instrumental performer is not altogether free from the charge of cramming. True it is that in our best orchestras the habit is impossible. Musicians under the *bâtons* of such conductors as Sir Michael Costa, Mr. Manns, and Mr. Cusins, are compelled to be masters of their particular craft. They have no time or opportunity for preparation, but must be ready at all seasons to do their work and their director's bidding. This faculty is the result of daily and hourly exercise. The exceptional facility possessed is not a gift or freak of nature, but the result of a special training that seldom has any equivalent in other branches of the art. The beneficial effects of daily application and performance may be observable also in those musicians who were educated as organists in cathedrals; the early, continuous, although monotonous work, has given them a certain mastery in their special department, so that like their orchestral brethren their efforts are more spontaneous and natural. Few, however, of our soloists convey to us impressions of being perfectly at ease. In listening to their performances we seldom can feel that they are engaged in an exercise which costs them no immediate labour. The painful grappings with difficulties are manifest; the forced labour, and the fearfully constrained attention, all denote that it is with them an usual effort; like full-bodied bottles with small necks, the flow is not free: in a word, cramming has been used for the occasion.

Dare we say that composers are not exempt from this charge?—that the chief priests and scribes of the divine art, the authors of our operas, oratorios, Te Deums, and symphonies, do not actually cram for their works? Can we insinuate that writing is not with them an every-day exercise, or a constant, involuntary and natural expression of their musical thoughts? With every feeling of admiration and respect for those gifted beings, and with a sense of our own humbleness, we cannot but confess that their productions often give us the impression of fatigued labour. We do not refer to any occasional barrenness of ideas, which must happen at times with the greatest creators in art, but rather to those tacit admissions made by the author, of an unwanted gathering of forces, of an awkward use of implements that from want of familiarity give the worker difficulty and pain, so as to make us feel, as when with an anxious and nervous host, that the feast is an extraordinary occasion. And herein is the real difficulty. Writing first-class works is not an every-day business. In the life of an accomplished musician, an opportunity but seldom offers. Pecuniary rewards for such are never to be had, for the English are anything but munificent patrons of high musical art. The man of genius, too easily disgusted, turns aside to the drudgery of teaching, and extinguishes all aspiration for fame, and should he then be called upon for a work of the highest order, is it to be wondered at that he may fail? He has thrown by his implements in the lumber-room, instead of keeping them bright and clean, ready for immediate use, on an emergency. He has forgotten that the goddess of music is a jealous goddess, claiming individual worship, and that to propitiate her he must turn his face from Mammon.

PENCERDD GWFFYD.

FREE LICENSING FOR THEATRES.

The want of administrative capacity in the English governing classes, and the tolerance of the general public of inefficiency and inaptitude on the part of their rulers, are things which strike one with wonder. Again and again both are exemplified. No matter whether it is such imperial matters as the army and the fleet that are concerned, or mere details—such as collection of revenues, every form of incapacity is constantly shown on the one side and every form of lenient judgment and indulgence on the other. Occupied with speculations upon great principles of government, our philosophers even scarcely condescend to enter the arena and discuss matters of practical management. While, accordingly, we have more real liberty than any other people under the sun, we are still cramped in the exercise of our privileges. Like a man whose dress is made by a clumsy tailor, the clothes which are too big for us in one direction are too tight in another, and while outsiders laugh at us for the bagginess of our dress we chafe under the inconvenience to which its tightness subjects us. In order, however, to understand how stupidly quiescent we can remain in a state of affairs wholly intolerable, it is necessary to come to the question of the general management of the theatres and places of amusement. Such a state of affairs as now exists—a muddle as complete as that into which we have now got, is surely unprecedented in English history or the history of any other nation. Again and again in this column have we protested against the inconveniences and absurdities which have resulted from the present state of affairs. Our remonstrances and protests, and those of others who have moved in the matter, have passed unheeded, and things, instead of mending have gone from bad to worse. Now, surely, at last the worst is reached, the very lowest deep beneath which is nothing, must at length have been found, and our legislators must be drawn into action by the force of the argument "ad absurdum."

It is, of course, known to our readers that the licenses to our places of amusement may be and are derived from two sources. Within the metropolitan district, so-called, permission to act stage plays is given to managers under certain restrictions of days by the Lord Chamberlain. A house which the Lord Chamberlain honours with his approval can give every day in the year, except Sunday, Christmas-day, and Good Friday, pieces which also have to receive his favourable verdict ere they can be performed. Music halls and minor places of entertainment are disconnected from this august official. These, or the majority of them, owe the permission to exist to that body—formidable in numbers—wealth and Beotian stupidity of intellect the Middlesex magistrates. Under the license of the Lord Chamberlain, or that of the magistrates, the vast majority of places of recreation exist. A few, however, contrive to dispense with any license whatever, and lead a life of out-lawed jollity. Some even manage to cater for public amusement under the pretence of edification, and lead men into a music hall by telling them they are taking them to chapel. What are the exact limits of the powers conferred by the various systems of licensing is not clearly known. Each party has tested to the utmost its powers, and a constant war has been maintained between the managers of the different classes of caterers for the public. It is on the subject of Good Friday performances, however, that the supreme difficulty has been encountered. Common consent allows Christmas-day to pass as a closed day at the theatres. An attempt, however, to convert Good Friday to uses profitable for the management has been frequently made in the course of past years. Bolder and bolder have grown the efforts, and more and more strenuous has become the resistance, until this year, as has been said, the very climax of absurdity has been attained. Scarcely a place of entertainment, from the Crystal Palace down to the lowest penny gaff, but has sought to turn to account the inclination of the people to frequent some place of amusement on a Good Friday evening. Entertainments, accordingly, consisting, for the most part, of sacred music, have been given, and it is their right to provide these that managers are now called upon to defend. A cross-fire of summonses has been opened as keen as any that comes from mitrailleuse or needle-gun. A attacks B, B in turn denounces C, and C in turn defends his interests by an attack upon A. The Crystal Palace has been selected for especial attack, and it seems likely that the right of that world-celebrated place of amusement to keep open on Good Friday for musical performances will be thoroughly tested. The proprietors of various theatres, notably Drury Lane, the Gaiety, and the Standard will have to bear the brunt of the assault. Less enterprising managers have shrunk out of the contest, and those of more pugnacious disposition have retorted by a counter-attack upon the proprietors of the music halls. One highly ingenious gentleman, the proprietor of a theatre, has hit upon the idea of taking out a license for preaching, and it is upon the strength of his possession of this he intends to defend himself against the actions of which notice has been given.

If the aspect of this state of affairs is at first sight ludicrous it assumes

upon reflection a less satisfactory appearance. It is, in very fact, humiliating that such a state of affairs should exist. We have in its maintenance a herald-tongued proclamation of our own inaptitude. Upon the managers of every form of authentic and justifiable entertainment matters press heavily. We make bold to say no manager of a music hall knows rightly what he can or cannot do. Whether the law does or does not permit his comic celebrities, the "stupendous stodger," and the remainder of his tribe to appear in costume and deliver their spoken words is a point on which he is ill at ease, not knowing absolutely whether his continued existence is not dependent upon the caprice of theatrical managers. All we know for certain is that certain genuinely purulent exhibitions always contrive, in spite of severity of laws, to exist, and may be nightly seen by the ingenious youth which wanders in pursuit of instruction or edification in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square, while responsible men, who have endeavoured to give the public the highest order of entertainment it can appreciate or will entertain, are met at every point with difficulty, embarrassment, and opposition.

We have tinkered too long with this system. Committees have met, reported upon the state of affairs, and done nothing. The half-hearted evidence of men so frightened for their property they have not known what to say has been received, recommendations have been made, suggestions imparted, and things have remained exactly where they were. What is now wanted is a radical change in the system of licensing. When you can no longer patch a garment you must throw it away. To that point have we now arrived with regard to our places of amusement. It is not edifying to the public, nor is it good for the masses to give them the right of a law wrested to all sorts of purposes of which its framers never dreamed, or turned into open ridicule by those whose supposed interest it is to maintain it. We cry, then, for free trade in theatres. That a man undertaking to open a place of entertainment should comply with certain conditions is obvious. He must supply sufficient opportunities for egress in case of fire, and he must see that every other obtainable security for life is supplied. These provisions made, a license should be granted to every respectable applicant. There should be no room for such suspicions of favouritism as arise when one of two dancing saloons is closed and the fortune of the other is made thereby. What reason is there why a license for theatrical performances should be refused to a score of buildings we can count off upon our fingers, supposing, that is to say, that it is desired by the proprietors. Why should not Exeter Hall—be still pious Church mission folks—have a dramatic licence, or St. James's Hall, or the Egyptian Hall, as well as the Gallery of Illustration? Are not Professor Herrmann's clever tricks, when performed with a confederate, dramatic, and does he not sometimes take members of his audience and make them unsuspectingly join with him in the performance of a play very edifying to the audience. At the Gallery of Illustration, Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, old and deserved favourites, both give, with their new and admirable allies, Mr. Cecil and Mr. Grain, a dramatic and a highly entertaining performance. At the St. James's Hall, the Christy Minstrels, a body which every one in London has been to see, once at least, give their musical songs, choruses, and recitations. Can any reason be assigned why these musicians should be prohibited from presenting a dramatic sketch should they choose to do so? What more natural than men as clever as these in musical and histrionic aid should seek to present a sketch like—let us say—the *Deux Aveugles* of Offenbach? But no! At this point the Lord Chamberlain steps in. "Nothing dramatic, gentlemen," says he, "yours is only a singing license." "Out upon such a system" say we. There is in the world no policy worse than that of surrounding trade with unnecessary restrictions, except that of inventing artificial crimes and vices. The system now followed does both. It is wholly inoperative. It is clumsy, bungling, absurd, out of date, and contrary to the feelings of intelligent Englishmen. Is not there sufficient cause advanced why it should be done away with and abolished?

BADEN.—M. de Lange lately gave a highly successful organ concert in the Evangelical Town Church. The principal pieces were: Prelude in E flat major, J. S. Bach; Concerto in D minor, for organ and orchestra, Handel; and Toccata in D minor, J. S. Bach.—Herr Johann Strauss has been conducting a series of concerts.—Professor Nohl is working like a zealous propagandist, as he is to disseminate among the musical heathen the true Wagnerian faith. On the 8th inst., he gave a Musical and Literary Matinée. The literary portion consisted of a lecture on the artistic development of Herr R. Wagner. The lecture was followed by a kind of musical illustration, the orchestra performing the overture to *Tannhäuser*; the introduction to *Lohengrin*; the introduction and the finale to *Tristan und Isolde*; and the "Kaisermarsch."

OFKEND.—M.M. Vieuxtemps, Brassin, and Servais have been concerting at the Salle du Casino.

Thaddens Egg on the Coming Festivals.

It may scarcely be said with truth that music is wholly absent from London just now, because the Moore and Burgess (late Christy) Minstrels are nightly presenting their entertainment, while occasionally the irrepressible Albert Hall opens its doors to a penny audience. But these exceptions apart, our great metropolis, though containing nearly as many people as during the "season," is given up to silence in all that regards music. There is neither reason nor logic in the phenomenon which springs from custom rather than necessity, and has fashion for its only *raison d'être*. But the musical destitution of the metropolis is the opportunity of the provinces. Singers and players are at liberty to betake themselves to the shires, and, for a "consideration" more moderate than would be possible at any other time, to charm the country ear with strains which else London would monopolize. Thus we are reminded once again that it is an ill wind which blows nobody good.

The great Festivals of the present autumn will be held at Worcester and Norwich, that of the Three Choirs commencing on September 9; that of the East Anglian capital following immediately after. But earlier than either—this very week, in point of fact—there will be musical doings on a smaller scale at the far-away town of Portmadoc. The Welsh Eisteddfod is not yet dead, though it has for some time been in a bad way, suffering from the odium of extremely stupid management. That it has survived so long is a proof of wonderful vitality, and nobody need despair of the thing now; not even those who know the whole story connected with it. We are glad to arrive at this conclusion, because, with all the nonsense usually spoken and acted at Eisteddfod gatherings, the general tendency of the institution is good, while its capacity for usefulness can hardly be over-estimated. Our Welsh friends need only temper excessive enthusiasm with a little more prudence and common sense to reap all the advantages their Eisteddfod can bestow; but whether they can ever do so is a matter only for conjecture. In any case, we believe the Eisteddfodau will continue, and that this week's proceedings on the shores of Cardigan Bay will assert, not for the last time by many, the strong interest taken by our neighbours in their own special and general culture. We will not anticipate the record of those proceedings to be given in our next impression. Enough that such artists as Miss Edith Wynne and Mr. Lewis Thomas are announced to take a prominent part; and that *The Bride of Neath Valley*, by Mr. John Thomas (who has accepted the post of musical judge,) will be performed under the composer's direction.

The venerable Festival of the Three Choirs takes place this year under good auspices. In the first instance, it is to be held in a Cathedral fresh from the hand of a skilful renovator, and, in itself, a source of great attraction for all who know how to admire a *chef d'œuvre* of Gothic art. The beautiful building has been treated with reverence as well as skill; and no ceremony could more fittingly crown the work than the series of musical performances which will shortly bring the surrounding population within its walls. But this is not all. Opposition to the Festival on religious grounds, once so virulent at Worcester under the stimulus of Lord Dudley's influence, has now died away, or, at least, makes no sign, because depressed by failure. That the spirit of opposition exists is certain, and it only waits a chance of success in order to enter upon active warfare. But no such chance presents itself now. Public opinion, in spite of noble and reverend examples to the contrary, has declared for the Festival, and before public opinion even ears and priests must bow. We cannot here enter upon a discussion as to the possible improvement of these Three Choir gatherings. No doubt they have largely departed from their founder's original idea without presenting corresponding artistic advantages; but, with all their defects of plan, they exert a wide-spread influence for good, and keep alive—where its life would otherwise languish—a feeling of regard for the claims of music in its noblest forms. The general arrangements of the approaching Festival resemble those of previous occasions; that is to say, the performances extend over four days, those given in the morning taking place in the Cathedral, those of the evening in the ancient College Hall. Mr. Done, the Cathedral organist, wields the *bâton* by virtue of his office; M. Sainton replaces Mr. Blagrove as leader of the band; and the solo vocalists include Mdlle. Tietjens, Madame Sierrington, Madame Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Vernon Rigby, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Lewis Thomas, and Mr. Santley. The chorus will largely consist of members of Mr. J. Barnby's choir, and we may therefore expect the efficiency which springs from a habit of working together. But, generally, as well as in this particular matter, the executive of the Festival leaves little or nothing to desire; and we could wish that ample rehearsal, under a conductor familiar to those who follow, might make the most of resources so good. Ample rehearsal, however, is out of the question, as well as out of fashion, and the present conductor is a necessity. The four days' programme gives no occasion for fault finding. It contains the *Messiah* and *Elijah*, as a matter of course; and with these essential works are presented Part I of the *Creation*;

the *Passion* (St. Matthew) of J. S. Bach, and other selections of interest. Bach's wonderful music may now be considered a "fixture" at these Festivals; and the result calls for unmixed congratulation. Its reception at Gloucester last year quite warranted Mr. Done in the step he has taken—a step we do not expect to see retracted in future. The evening programmes are, as they should be, something more than miscellaneous assortments of fugitive pieces—lengthy selections from acknowledged classical works constituting their chief feature. Thus the audience will derive instruction as well as amusement from what they hear, carrying away some definite impressions instead of the vagueness necessarily attendant upon "assisting" at a performance of musical odds and ends.

It only remains to hope that the weather—always a very important consideration in country festivities—may be propitious; and that the public will take care to sustain the *raison d'être* of these unique gatherings by supporting the charity with which they are connected.

Another opportunity is sure to present itself of referring at length to the Festival of Norwich, and we shall merely touch upon it here. So far as the contemplated proceedings are known they show a determination on the part of Sir J. Benedict and the committee to retrieve the disaster of 1869. This, however, is not only an obvious but an essential policy. No institution of the kind could well survive two such shocks, and it will be almost a matter of life or death to win or miss success on the approaching occasion. We believe, in accordance with our wishes, that a good result is assured, because not only has a better time for holding the Festival been chosen, but the programme exhibits much greater attraction. Thus Sir J. Benedict's *St. Peter* is announced for the first time at Norwich, as well as two movements from a new symphony by the same composer. Mr. G. A. Macfarren contributes a new cantata, *Outward Bound*; Mr. Cowen sends a new concert-overture; and there is talk, also, of a novelty from the pen of a local celebrity. These things will pleasantly vary the round of excellent standard works fixed upon, and the entire programme can hardly fail to excite the utmost possible interest. Equally good in its way, is the list of artists, comprising Mdlle. Tietjens, Mdlle. Cora de Wilhorst, Mdlle. Altani, Mdlle. Patey; Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. Patey, and Mr. Santley; while M. Sainton will "lead" one of the best orchestras ever guided by Sir J. Benedict's wand of office. On the whole, then, the prospects of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival are highly promising, and much good may be expected from it both in an artistic and charitable sense.

Thaddens Egg.

[About the doings at Portmadoc we may possibly be informed next week. If not—*tant pis*.—A. S. SILENT.]

ITALIAN OPERA COMPANY IN AMERICA.

(From the "Philadelphia Inquirer," Aug. 13.)

Mr. Maretzek has engaged an Italian Opera company consisting of the following artists:—*Prime donne soprani*—Mdlle. Pauline Lucca (Baroness von Rhaden), Miss Clara-Louise Kellogg, Mdlle. Rosina Laveille, from the Grand Opera, Paris (this lady has for years sung rôles like those of Inez, in *L'Africaine*, Isabella, in *Robert*, the Queen, in *Les Huguenots*, and was the favourite Filina, in *Mignon*). *Prima donna contralto*—Mdlle. Eleanor Sanz, from the Teatro Real, Madrid and later from the Grand Opera, Paris; *seconde donne*—Mdlle. Emma Ferretti and Mdlle. Mina Cooney; *first tenors*—Signors Vizzani, from Her Majesty's Opera, Drury Lane, London, and Abrugnedo, *tenore di forza*, a Spaniard by birth, and about thirty years of age, when a child receiving lessons in music from the justly celebrated Ronconi, whom he will now meet in the same company. *Second tenors*—Signor Manresa, from Covent Garden, and Mr. Charles Lyall. *Baritone*—Moriamini, an artist who sang last season under the management of Merilla, at Moscow, Sparapani, the principal feature of the last Tamboerlick season at the Tacon Theatre, Havana. * *Buffo*—Ronconi. *First basses*—Jamet, who has already made his mark here for one season, and Coulon, a noted singer at the Grand Opera Paris, Covent Garden, La Scala, and New Orleans. *Second basses*—Cotto and Berthaki, from London. The *répertoire* is as follows:—*Mireille*, Gounod; *Contessa di Malfi*, Petrella; *L'Ombre*, Flotow (these three are new); *L'Africaine*, Les Huguenots, *Il Trovatore*, Don Giovanni, *Fra Diavolo*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Mignon*, *La Favorita*, *Faust*, *Der Freischütz*, *La Traviata*, *Martha*, *Linda*, *Lucia*, *Regina*, *Polito*. The season in New York commences on September 30th, and will last until December 12th. The company appears at Philadelphia on December 16th, remaining there two weeks; then at Baltimore, December 30th, one week; Boston, January 6th, three weeks; Providence and Hartford, on January 27th and 28th; New York, February 3rd, eight weeks; Holy Week, *relache*; Cincinnati, April 14th, one week; Louisville and Indianapolis, April 21st, one week; St. Louis, April 28th, one week; Chicago, May 5th, two weeks—and then, close of the season.

* Sig. Sparapani has also sung at Her Majesty's Opera, and with genuine success.—Ed. M. W.

EYLES' FUND.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE appointed to carry out the above object having resolved now to wind up this matter as expeditiously as possible, owing to the lamented decease of Miss EYLES, would feel obliged by your kindly remitting your promised Subscription to the undersigned, at your early convenience, if you have not already done so.

Immediately the total is realised, it will be applied in payment of Miss EYLES' debts (including her funeral expenses), according to the assurance given her; and any surplus will be divided amongst, and returned to, the Subscribers in proportion to the amount of their Subscriptions.

I am, yours faithfully,
EDWARD LAND, Treasurer.

P.S.—The accounts will be made up by the Treasurer as soon as possible, and a Statement, with List of Subscriptions, forwarded to the donors.

4, Cambridge Place, Regent's Park, N.W.,
July, 1872.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Dr. HIBBIS.—Our correspondent is wholly wrong about Grétry and Méhul (every one seems to be wrong about Grétry and Méhul). Dr. Hibbis should read Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres*—not Browne's *Urn Burials* (that would hardly do), but Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres*. Grétry was a Belgian—not a Frenchman. In every other point contained in his letter, Dr. Hibbis is abroad. We, therefore (for his own sake), decline to print it.

NOTICE.

TO ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs. DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1872.

ENGLISH AND FOREIGN ARTISTS.

THE controversy on the question of English and foreign artists still rages in the columns of our contemporary, the *Sunday Times*. Three more letters have appeared. In the following, despite an occasional sprinkling of nonsense, there is much that is true, and not a little that is interesting:—

(To the Editor of the "*Sunday Times*.")

SIR,—As I see you have been good enough to open your columns for the purpose of giving native musicians an opportunity of ventilating their grievances, I beg respectfully to add my testimony to that of "Quaver," relative to the quality of the intelligent foreigner. I have been studying my profession for upwards of twenty years, and during that time have had many opportunities of observing the difference between foreign and native musicians, and I have arrived at the conclusion that an English musician in the orchestra is, at the very least, twice as good as a foreigner. The difference is manifest to even an unskilled listener when two play off the same desk, one being French, &c., and the other home-made. If the Englishman stops playing before the piece has concluded, the foreigner almost invariably follows suit, or else (having been playing very feebly, while the other was "pulling out") makes a most unpleasant and jarring effort to do what he not unfrequently is paid more for doing (or not doing) than his enthusiastic companion. Now this is of such frequent occurrence that there are very few musicians who are not cognizant of it.

But I would not have you believe that I include all foreigners. Far from it. In glancing at the past it is but natural that I should be filled with pride, and love, and reverence for the gifted Purcell, but, at the same time, I am not insensible to the floods of melody and harmony, combined in the most masterly manner, that have flowed in and permeated the length and breadth of the land, from the pens of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. No. The foreigners I

allude to are those of recent importation, who, being utterly below the standard for admission to a *café chantant* come over to this country, and by the recommendation of "Signor This," or "Mons. That," or "Herr Anybody," comfortably take the places in our orchestras—even in the opera—of men whose whole lives have been devoted to that one object. English musicians, as a rule, used to look upon the opera as the grand portal to all that was glorious in the "divine art;" for from it they ascended to the soul entrancing regions of purely classical music—viz., oratorio, mass, symphony. But now, I am sorry to say, that, in consequence of the inferior article with which the market has been glutted, we are fast losing sight of our art for its own sake and dangerously estimating our proficiency by the accumulation of our pounds, shillings, and pence. That the foreigners (I mean the inferior ones, of which we complain) come to our orchestras for very low salaries is perfectly true; for I knew one who had, as a first violin player, the poor pittance of 22s. a week. Heaven and themselves only know how they and their families exist on such scanty means. And as for the effect they produce, it certainly would be less grating to the senses of their *confrères* and the audience—not to mention the singers—if they were awarded the miserable stipend solely on condition of stopping away. Year after year the stage is crowded with the lower extremities of the most rigid females, and, season after season, the occupants of stalls and stage boxes are deafened with the terrible thunder of grosse caisse and cymbals. We unfortunate fiddlers and wind-instrument players are almost driven mad. But what can we do? "The gods will have nothing but legs and drums." So say the managers in effect. But I am certain, if our ballets were recruited from professional dancers, and our orchestras were filled with English musicians, and not with the musical refuse of the continent, the audiences would quickly appreciate the difference between "dumb show and noise," as it is at present, and "graceful movement" and genial sound," as it ought to be.

I am very glad to see that Mr. Rivière has become an Englishman, for, from his position, he will be enabled to do more than most conductors in preventing impostors from taking the bread out of the mouths of his adopted countrymen. I also hope he will dissuade his *employés* from a practice which is calculated to destroy the art of fiddlemaking in this country—i.e., importing those cheap French instruments, which are, I should say, sold by the gross, and are almost worthless. For, by paying the same amount of instalments weekly (with very little added) to an English house, they would be able to procure first-class instruments, and have the satisfaction of knowing that they were giving new life to a most deserving and praiseworthy craft.

If the present system of bringing over uneducated so-called musicians is continued, we shall soon have "no work to do;" then, heigh, ho! for the colonies, or America. Our salaries have been steadily on the decrease, while the prices of food and clothing seem to presage a famine. When we go there will be nothing left in our orchestras but the futile screeching of a crowd of French and German fiddles, and people will be amazed to hear nothing in an overture but the fitful sounds of the wind-instruments, which will be just heard long enough to recall the memories of happier days, when the roaring of drums and clashing of cymbals shall rudely dissipate all fond recollections and leave nothing but a dismal squeak behind. I refer to the instruments as reviving old memories in the recollections of the audiences, because, for the most part, our orchestras are supplied with them by the Guards' bands. They are bound to remain, willy nilly, and, as by the rules of the service, their mouths are shut. I think it is only fair to lay before the musical public some of the hardships military bandmen are compelled to undergo.

One instance will suffice for the present, and I assure you like examples could be multiplied *ad infinitum*. On the 12th of July last Mr. Mapleson gave a monster concert at the Albert Hall. There were ten bands engaged for the occasion—viz., Marine Artillery, Portsmouth; Engineers and Marines, Chatham; Royal Artillery, Woolwich; Blues, Windsor; 1st and 2nd Life Guards, Scots Fusiliers, and Coldstreams, London. Now, before those bands are allowed to go to engagements of this kind, the permission of the officers must be obtained, and it is but reasonable to suppose that they have sufficient interest in the bands which cost them so much to support, to see that the men who contribute so largely to the prestige of their respective regiments are, when engaged in a professional capacity, treated in a manner becoming their well-earned reputations and artistic excellence. Personally, of course, they do not interfere, but, no doubt, they rely on their bandmasters to prevent the men from being placed in positions not only derogatory to their military status, but most humiliating to them as musicians. If on this occasion officers have done this, let them learn how their confidence has been misplaced. I'll take for example one band—the bandmaster being a foreigner—numbering over forty, who were "ordered" for rehearsal on the day in question, at 10 a.m., and did not get from it until 1.30 p.m.; then "ordered" at 2.45 for

concert, and were kept at it until 5.45—six hours and a half hard work. A month nearly elapsed before they received their pay; and what do you think they got? *Miserabile dictu!* About one-fourth received 7s. each, and all the rest only 5s. Some of those very men have played at Mr. Mapleson's Operahouse, and received three, four, and five times the amount nightly, for the season, that they got at the Albert Hall for a day's hardwork. This is a monstrous state of things, and reflects great discredit on somebody. Either officers or bandmasters are to blame. In any case our military brethren suffer, and because they wear the Queen's cloth they have no remedy. At the concert were H.R.H. the Princess of Wales and several members of the Royal family. Surely, if they had known that the musicians before them, who worked so hard and pleased so well, were treated in the degrading way I have described, they would never have given their patronage or their presence to such a disgraceful proceeding. And I am sure that Mr. Cousins, director of the Queen's private band, and conductor of the Old Philharmonic Society, who conducted the concert, would never have raised his *bâton* if he was aware of the circumstances I have related.

I have said that, if this state of things is to continue, we will go. But I should like to inform those incompetent foreigners that we will not—to use a homely phrase—"let the bone go with the dog." We will make a fight for it, and I have no doubt that, if we are supported by the musical press and the musical public, our places will soon cease to be "requisitioned." On which happy consummation being arrived at we will cheerfully open negotiations with the manager of the next Boston Festival, and undertake to supply him with all our superfluous catgut, horsehair, and resin. Thanking you, sir, for your great kindness in allowing the *Sunday Times* to be the medium whereby we may send our woes to the public with a certainty of their being entertained, I remain yours, &c.,

July 10, 1872.

A DEMISEMIQUAVER.

The good taste of the letter subjoined may, we think, be at least considered questionable by the advocates of either side:—

SIR,—Having read your very able article in last Sunday's issue I presume, sir, that the secret of the foreigner prospering more than the Englishman is his barefaced and abominable impudence. It is a positive fact, well-known to myself and brother (English) professionals, that one half of the foreigners who obtain situations—aye, and obtain good salaries—are not so much as holders of their instruments, let alone being executants. Would an Englishman be tolerated in a continental orchestra? I imagine not. Such an occurrence would almost cause a musical revolution. The sneaking way they possess, and their endeavours to obtain situations at most ridiculously low salaries (as stated by your correspondent, "C. J. B.") are well known to us all. I think, sir, if all English musical directors (and why should there be any other in England?—there are plenty of able, experienced, and thoroughly practical men to be found) of our theatres were to determine not to employ the foreign element in their orchestras, part of our case might be met. With respect to fashion as a patron of music, especially foreign, I may say that I have attended first-class chamber concerts at the West-end, consisting of English artists, and the attendance has been extremely small. I have also attended the same class of concerts, consisting of foreign artists, and the attendance has been immense—in fact, no standing room—not because the talent was greater at the foreign than the English concert; but, doubtless, because the English artists have no foreign finale attached to their names. Others have noticed this as well as myself. Such a state of affairs is simply a disgrace. I positively know (I am sorry to say) English people who will deny that a native musician is worth listening to. It is true, sir, that the English musician is neither sneak nor hypocrite. All he wants and reasonably demands is that England should patronise and support English musicians. Apologising for the length of this letter, and trusting this matter may be more ventilated than at present, I remain yours, &c.,

August 14th, 1872.

A BRITISH MUSICIAN.

This style of reasoning is calculated to make impartial judges indifferent to the whole question. It is much easier to apply hard words than to find solid arguments. "Sneak," "hypocrite," "barefaced and abominable impudence," are slashing terms; but they savour so strongly of Billingsgate that it is difficult to believe they can under any circumstances have proceeded from the pen of an English gentleman. We have always, with national sympathy—national prejudices, if you will—clung fondly to the belief that "English Musician" and "English Gentleman" were convertible phrases. But, should many more letters in this

tone of the foregoing appear during the progress of this controversy, we shall begin to hesitate in our belief.

The last letter for which we can find space this week is from an advocate of the foreign side, and contains not only some direct and apposite home thrusts, but a fair modicum of shrewd common sense:—

SIR,—The English are proud of being great grumblers; at home they enjoy it; abroad they pay for it. But what, sir, is now the cause of the growlings and howlings of the English musician at us poor foreign fiddlers? No notice should I take of their nasty tempers, if at the time they were using *resin*, for that is very trying stuff to good humour. But my blood boils to see words they dare not use to my face told to the world in your honest and usually generous journal. They say we are invaders and impostors. Guilty, I say, to the first charge. But cannot the British forgive this offence? Do not they glory in being the world's invaders? Their flag invades every sea, and many large lands; every port and mart of the earth is invaded by their commerce; and yet they deem me and my poor fiddle criminal invaders?—I cannot debase my pen so far as to answer the charge of being an impostor. Other weapons are often used to such insults. I would only say the English public are not fools any more than foreign artists are rogues. Neither will I retaliate by saying that the English player is not as able as honest, but I would beg of him not to be cross in the slack season, and so cruel as to demand our expulsion. Is it not, sir, inconsistent that they should wish to drive back to "Vaterland" the poor German fiddler, and yet to keep the stock-in-trade so bountifully made to them by my countrymen—the great composers Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Weber, and Mendelssohn? These giants were really the invaders. They found this country, musically, as barren as a desert, and have enriched it by their genius into a smiling garden. When I am playing my part in any of their great works I do not feel a foreigner. No!—I am at home with my own people. In whatever orchestra I may be fiddling I can lift my head and claim my right to be there if Beethoven or Mozart provide the themes. Let English instrumentalists "strike" against playing all foreign music, and I will be content; then, heaven bless them, they will have nothing to do. Their occupation will be gone. But they should be comforted; they have a sweet revenge; for the foreigner is generally "requisitioned" by the fair daughters of Albion. Our forefathers, the Saxon invaders, brought not their wives with them; the fair-haired warriors were the young, single men, the sons, and not the fathers of the peoples that dwell beyond the seas. They chose to them for wives the children of the conquered. And so with us. We come over in our youth, marry, and settle here, and are for ever happy slaves to our families; our children are more English than the English; and so, in one generation, we become in prejudices, feelings, and interests, thorough Britons. For many years I have enjoyed the proud privilege of paying rent and taxes in Kentish Town, and though not legally naturalized, still, I claim equity and generous fair play. Apologising to "Demisequaver" for the brevity of this letter, and to you for its length, I am, &c.,

A GERMAN FIDDLER.

With no less force might Italians appeal to the justice of English musical performers, on the strength of Cherubini, Cimarosa, Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, etc.; and the French on that of their Boieldieu, Auber—*cum multis aliis*. We cannot but repeat the opinion expressed in our last number—that "the entire controversy is little better than childish."

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—Could you or any of your numerous readers inform me, and many of my friends, upon what principle the London School Board has confirmed the appointment of examiner, reporter etc., for the School under their control? [Our columns are open to a reply.] If, by examination, competition, or favour?—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

INQUIRER.

FOR MUSIC.

Ampd the toure a walle din spreng,
That neber is drye but erenpge.*

To A. S. Sullivan, Esq.

* For walle say well—and you will say well. D. P.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The subjoined comes from an old and trustworthy correspondent, who is at present in the United States of America:—

"It has become a mania among the ladies of Uppertendom in America to essay the rôle of *prima donna*. Among the latest aspirants is Mrs. T. Picton Rowe, daughter of the Honourable R. D. Livingston, representative of one of those old families who trace their descent, through colonial times, to noble progenitors in the old country, and give tone to a *clique* of American Society, as exclusive as the aristocracy of England. Mrs. Rowe possesses a pure soprano voice of great power and richness, and, should she determine to continue in the profession she has adopted, will, doubtless, become one of the prominent singers of our period."

We read the following in *Harper's Bazar*, New York:—

"It seems that Madame Arabella Goddard's son is not learning business in a Boston dry-goods house, after all. That young gentleman, who has just attained the mature age of twelve, was left by his mamma in England to study the classics and mathematics in school, which we think a much wiser disposition of his time at present than the measurement of silks and laces. But Madame Rudersdorff is reported to have placed her son with Jordan, Marsh & Co., of Boston, which probably gave rise to the mistake."

These misrepresentations are too frequently made on purpose (we do not accuse *Harper's Bazar*—Heaven forbid!), and then corrected afterwards, for the sake of having two "chatty" paragraphs—by which, we mean paragraphs containing supposed information about the private life of public artists—instead of one.

THE friends of Professor Oakeley, and the many persons who have sympathized with his sufferings from the accident which happened to him early in June, between St. Nicholas and Zermatt, will be glad to hear that he is going on well, and is comparatively free from pain, at the Hôtel de la Couronne, at Geneva. It seems almost miraculous that he should be still alive when one considers the complicated nature of his injuries—a knee cap broken into five pieces, a dislocated hip-joint, and a fracture high up in the thigh-bone. I hear that he hoped to see Sir James Paget yesterday, and so to obtain the best opinion as to his state, and the probable time of his recovery. Sir James is taking his well-earned summer repose at a place not far from Geneva, but which I shall not name lest I should thereby be laying him open to importunities which his kind heart would render it difficult for him to repel. I have not yet heard whether he saw Professor Oakeley, who looks surprisingly well, considering what he has gone through, and who hopes to be about upon crutches in another two or three weeks.—*Geneva, Aug. 27th.* ("Times" correspondence.)

WHY BAYREUTH?

SIR,—I have already told you emphatically that the festivities in inauguration of the laying of the foundation stone of the provisional theatre, in which the first performances of Wagner's long promised trilogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, are to take place, attracted a vast number of artists and friends of the German master to this out-of-the-way and usually quiet place. I had so often been asked why Bayreuth was selected for the purpose, in preference to some more frequented city, that I was moved to state, through your world-spread columns, that it was principally on account of its central position, and because a convenient site for a theatre there offered itself. That a new work which requires four evenings for its complete presentation could only be brought out in a theatre specially devoted to the purpose is at once apparent when we consider the inconvenience which would arise were the attempt to be made in one already established, and which for months beforehand would have to be closed, to the inconvenience of its regular public, accustomed to a nightly change of performance. And that is the yellow of it.—Yours obediently, THOS. YEBB (D.D.)

[We do not remember having received any previous communication on this subject from Dr. Yebb. It is just possible we may have been from home, or—in metaphorical phrase,—“abroad.”—ED. M.W.]

MUNICH.—A concert was to be given, under the direction of Herr Hans von Bulow, in the Odeon, on the 21st, for the benefit of the “National Theatre” at Bayreuth. The following artists had promised their services: Mdm. Mallinger, Herr Fritz Hartwichson, and Herr Heinrich Vogl

“WENN ICH EIN VÖGLEIN WÄR.”

(To the Editor of the “Musical World.”)

SIR,—Allow me, as the writer of the English version of the above-named stanzas, first to thank you for the complimentary terms in which you speak of the translation inserted in your columns of the 24th inst., and then I would ask to explain the seeming irregularity in the third line of the last stanza, as compared with the corresponding line, both in the first and second stanzas. Those of your readers who may be acquainted with Dr. Hiller's charming song, set to the words indicated above, will perfectly understand the cause of the irregularity referred to; but to those who do not know the song, it may be as well to explain, that the words, which in the German correspond with “To fly to thee,” in the first verse, and “I talk with thee,” in the second verse, are repeated in the song; for the third line in each verse consists of eight syllables, and in the last stanza the third line runs thus:—“It ever longs to break these bonds,” which words, of course, could not be divided without interfering with the sense included in that line.

I may, perhaps, be permitted to offer a few remarks upon these German national songs. The words of this “Vöglein”—like others of the kind—were no doubt composed by the people; there is not the least order or regularity in the metre or the rhyme; the chief value and charm of this kind of poetry being found in its extreme simplicity.

I am aware that such freedom and irregularity are not regarded with the same leniency when they occur in the English verse, and therefore, judging my translation by that standard, if I have committed some faults in the eyes of the more severe critics, it is because of my anxiety to give a faithful rendering of the original; and, perhaps, a further excuse may be found in the fact, which most of your readers will be ready to acknowledge—viz., that it is extremely difficult to give effect, in another language, to the poetic thoughts and expressions of another writer, and, at the same time, to adapt the stanzas to music which is already composed.—I am, Sir, yours obediently.

P.S.—I may just add, that a highly gifted German *prima donna* was so charmed with the quaintness of the English verse, that she sang them to Dr. Hiller's music in preference to the original words, and she found that, as a rule, English audiences liked the English better than the German version.—*August 26th.*

PROVINCIAL.

BRIGHTON.—At the *soirée* given by the British Association, on Tuesday, the 13th inst., a concert was given under the auspices of Mr. H. Taylor, conductor of the Harmonic Union. From an article in the *Brighton Daily News* we condense the following:—

“The artists were Miss Kate Poyntz, Miss Alice Fairman, Miss Sophia Heilbron, and Mr. George Perren. The first-mentioned lady, besides taking part in several concerted pieces, contributed songs by Haydn and Gounod. Miss Fairman sang several ballads with her accustomed success. Mr. Perren sang Hatton's “Good bye, sweet-heart,” in a manner which left nothing to be desired. Miss Heilbron, a pianist of very considerable power, made a successful *début*, and a bright artistic future is before her. Although only fifteen years of age, Miss Heilbron is an accomplished pianist. She was unanimously encored in Vincent Wallace's “Cracovia.” Mr. Taylor, besides officiating as conductor, gave a performance on the grand organ.

CREMONA INSTRUMENTS AT THE VIENNA EXHIBITION OF 1873.

(Communicated.)

For some months in the summer of 1873, there will be, in connection with the Vienna Universal Exhibition, a special exhibition of as many of the ancient Italian violins and allied instruments, such as tenors, violoncellos, and double basses, even single parts undoubtedly genuine, such as scrolls, base-bars, bridges, sound posts, &c., as can be brought together.

These will be submitted to the examination of a skilled jury, not for the purpose of assigning a rank to the instruments, but in order that a *résumé* may be issued, showing what, in the opinion of the jury, are the qualities required for the production of good new instruments.

The principle will be that all works which are not genuine, that is to say, not of Italian or Tyrolean origin, and all those which, even if genuine in some of their parts, have lost their original character by repairs, are to be excluded.

THE EISTEDDFOD.

PORTMADOC, Wednesday.

The traveller who, following the line of the Chester and Holyhead Railway, skirts the Menai Bridge, runs past Carnarvon's historic towers, and strikes the shores of Cardigan Bay, will come at length upon a little town, towards which the eyes of patriotic Welshmen are just now turned with interest. Here in Portmadoc is being held, with all due observance of ancient rites, and in accordance with proclamation made a year and a day ago, the "Eisteddfod Cadririol Eryri, and musical festival of Wales." It is no Hole-and-Corner event, this gathering of the Bards—Welshmen of all degrees being banded together for its success. No less distinguished a personage than the Premier of England lends it his patronage; Lord Mostyn, Lord Penrhyn, and Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, "Prince in Wales," are the presidents; while bishops and members of Parliament by the half-score swell the list of supporters. No wonder that Portmadoc is just now a little puffed up—very gay, very full, and very noisy; that its streets—if I may venture to use the plural, when more than one is hard to find—suggests a country fair, and that unconscious English tourists taking the place *en route* are glad to push on in search of calmer scenes. Disaster may have overtaken the grand National Eisteddfod which used year by year to excite animosity between Welsh Bards and English reviewers; but the love of the people for Eisteddfodau continues as great as ever. Of this the present aspect of Portmadoc is proof. Druids, Bards, and Vates are the heroes of the hour, and they wear the badges of their rank with evident pride. It may be that the genius of Portmadoc inspires them. "The locality," said an orator at the Eisteddfod held here 21 years ago "is interesting. It is Tremadoc, the Athens of Eifonydd, where the mighty Dervl Wynna on a similar occasion acquired illustrious celebrity; where in the vicinity the Plato of Eivion trains his young genius in the groves of Cefnmeysydd; where Ambrose Joan Madawg and Alltud Eifion led on a youthful band of poetical probationers to wear the laurels of the forthcoming age." Though a benighted Saxon, like myself, knows little of Dervl Wyn, or even of the Plato of Eivion, doubtless the Bards here present know all about them, and in their case to walk the streets once trodden by such sages must be to feel the influence of elevated associations. But if the doings of the hierarchy of Bardism and its old-world observances are meaningless to an Englishman, that supplies no reason why we, of all people, should undervalue a conservatism which protects ancient customs, especially when associated, as now, with a spirit of progress. I look upon this Portmadoc Eisteddfod with toleration for its odd observances, and with a desire to find out all in it that is good and worthy of encouragement or imitation.

Portmadoc was fully alive at ten o'clock this morning, when the Druids, Bards, and Vates opened the Gorsedd in ancient form, and afterwards escorted the president of the day, Lord Mostyn, to the Pavilion. These curious preliminaries will be repeated on each of the three days of the festival. Enough now to say that the procession made a brave show, and that a brass band, in rifle uniform, made a great noise with appropriately national music. The Pavilion was well attended by all classes, and its ample space decked, with flags, mottoes, evergreens, and the brightest of coloured drapings, looked as cheerful as could be wished. Never before, perhaps, was more care taken to hide the inevitable ugliness of the huge wooden edifice in which these meetings are held; and Portmadoc may credit itself with having set a good example by refusing to look upon that ugliness as irremediable. Besides the usual ornaments, ivy and other climbing plants are trained over the walls; the platform is flanked by huge vases filled with ferns, and a pretty fountain sparkles in front of the presidential chair. These are little matters; but they show the advance in taste which the Eisteddfod seeks to promote. Lord Mostyn having been formally installed as president, opened the proceedings with a few words expressive of kindly interest—words which were justified by unflagging attention throughout a long sitting; and then the business of the day commenced. The plan is a good one, but capable of improvement—the president reigning, while the task of governing devolves upon a "conductor," who is responsible for order; but practically the conductors are legion. Every bard on the platform seems more or less afflicted with the *cacothia loquendi*, and rushes forward to deliver his soul whenever the chance arises of putting in a word. Hence much confusion, waste of time, and a general impression of fussiness and self-importance which strike the unaccustomed eye very disagreeably. This, however, is an old Eisteddfod fault, not specially chargeable to Portmadoc, and one which, I fear, cannot easily be cured. It would be well if Nyddog who governs now, and Janymarean, who succeeds him on Friday, would put their feet down and insist upon the reality as well as the semblance of power. Should they do so, may I be there to see. The consternation of loquacious Druids and Vates would equal that of the College of Cardinals, when a certain renowned successor of St. Peter turned out to be a master instead of a puppet.

A great variety marked the competitions of the day, as may be

inferred from the list of those for the entire festival, forty-three prizes being divided as follows:—To poetry, eleven; prose, one; essays, seven; music, nine; art, fourteen; and botany, one. The preponderance of art prizes is explained by the comprehensiveness of the term, including as it does slate-splitting, slate-dressing, the making of flannels, stockings, and horseshoes; but in every other subject a similar elasticity prevails. Poetry for example, includes an epitaph, in the making of which there is undoubtedly room for improvement; and music comprises penillion singing at one extreme and congregational psalmody at the other; the result is sufficient change, and consequently sustained interest, spite of the length to which adjudicators are often tempted to go when making their awards. Some of the competitions this morning being due to private inspiration were curious enough. Imagine a son offering two guineas for the best epitaph on his parents, and another gentleman offering five guineas for the best ode (Cywydd) on "The late patriot, the Rev. Dr. James." But, however curious, these prizes help to stimulate thought scarcely less than those which are reversed for essays on topics of a wider range. In all it was interesting to note the keen interest expressed by the audience, whose attention never flagged, and whose decided verdict on every effort was never wanting. Being a Welsh audience, music stirred them most of all, and of music there was enough, though some of the professionals failed to appear. The Eisteddfod choir, a body of vigorous voices, contributed several concerted pieces. Miss Megan Watts sang a Welsh song with effect; Mr. John Thomas gave a brilliant harp solo; and there were competitions in penillion singing, triple harp playing, and in the performance by choirs numbering less than 40 voices of a selected anthem. North Wales is the home of penillion, and it was not surprising to find six candidates for the prize in this curious and ancient art. The contest exhibited much ingenuity, but the real struggle lay between a veteran well-known at every Eisteddfod, and a much younger candidate, who eventually was declared the victor. Among the triple harp players, a young woman, wearing the national costume, attracted much attention by stepping forward, knitting in hand, and playing the needles vigorously till her instrument was ready. The device had its effect, and called forth abundant sympathy, if it did not influence the judge. It is too plain that the Welsh conductors think more of machine-like precision and noisy effects than of refinement and grace. Let them look to this matter, or most certainly the Crystal Palace Challenge Cup will pass out of the principality next year.

As I write, a concert is being held in the Pavilion, sustained by Miss Edith Wynne, Mrs. Wynne Matthison, Mr. Lewis Thomas, Miss Bessie Waugh (piano), and others. The programme, however, has no special interest. To-morrow will be a great day, Lord Penrhyn presiding.

DRAMATISTS AND ACTORS *versus* CRITICS.

The quarrel between author, actor, and critic is one the origin of which is easy to see; the remedy less easily found. So long as the professions of creator and critic have existed there has been between them an uneasy alliance breaking out constantly into feud, and so long as both endure, a state of affairs not very dissimilar may be expected. The relations between the two can never be easy. Apollo, God of Poetry, had as little mind to put up with criticism as with rivalry, and his manner of flaying alive his critic, Marsyas, was calculated to strike terror into the whole brotherhood. Apollo's descendants have hardly been more merciful; and the fact that the flaying of those who have the bad taste to underestimate their works is now metaphorical, and not literal, dates simply from matters of convenience. Nature has not always endowed the writer with physical powers in accordance with his mental stature, and we hear little concerning other than literary punishment for critical offences. It is not wholly to censure a writer or an artist to say that he is thin-skinned. Did he belong to the *pachydermata*, were not his mind sensible at all points, and his frame finely fibred, he would not be what he is. He has, of course, the liveliest appreciation of every form of assault, and the smallest sting is torture to him. But so long as authors are authors, what change can be expected? In addition to sensitiveness the writer and the artist have a lively appreciation of the value of their own work. To the ideal they have formed the critic cannot always ascend; and what more convincing proof of incompetence need be suggested? There is thus no escape from the indignation which the critic is certain to raise, except when his eulogy reaches the required point. There is something particularly annoying in the existence of a hostile critic. A man writes a poem or a play, paints a picture, composes a sonata, presents some character in a drama, or discharges some function of creative or expository art. Shortly afterwards he reads what seems to him a venomous attack. Knowing how much pains he has bestowed upon his work, he writhes under the imputation of having produced something crude and inadequate. If the

fault found seems, as it probably will, unjust, he is annoyed. If it is just, if he cannot escape from the conviction that the censure passed is merited, annoyance becomes rage and mortification. What can be more vexatious than to see work on which you have bestowed time and care pulled to pieces and held up to contrast? There is, besides, a monetary inconvenience, for commonly the criticism interferes with the success of the thing criticised, and diminishes its chances of a profitable result. "Why am I thus injured?"—asks, while young—the sufferer? "A man who does indifferent work in other respects does not get thus held up to public contempt." And this, so far as it goes, is true. To show, however, the other side of the question. The carpenter who does bad work solicits no criticism; the writer, painter, and actor deliberately challenge it, and, when it is favourable, gain by it. They put to the arbitrament of the critic the point, whether they shall have a long public announcement of success—or whether they shall receive a damaging attack. Criticism is to them a necessity. Without it their fame must be deferred for years. Criticism gives the actor his only chance of being known to coming generations. But for Colly Cibber what should we have known of the Mountforts and Bracegirdles whose names are so familiar? The actor should remember that their "ill report while living" combines with the disadvantages usually associated with it, those, also, of a "bad epitaph," and that their favourable verdict secures not only present gain but future memory.

A method of treating the critic a little less contemptuously might, under such circumstances, be counselled for the sake of expedience alone. We have had some unedifying displays of the kind of animosity entertained by writers towards critics who may differ from them. Sometimes, indeed, forgetting all restraint, a writer answers criticism with violent abuse. Such cases, however, are rare, and it would not be just to build general accusation upon them. There is in English literature only one sinner of this class, and the more charitable who contemplate his eccentricities impugn his intellect rather than his heart.

A more common outcry is that critics are influenced by prejudice, antipathy, or some dishonouring motive. That they are men who, having vainly striven after success in the line on which they pronounce judgment, become critics on that account alone. Anything will be done by the criticised sooner than confess himself deservedly condemned. Now whether these outcries are mainly is a point on which we need not enter. Enough that we know them in the majority of instances to be untrue. Indifferent is, doubtless, much of the criticism of the day. It shares in the general decline of art, and has few of the qualities with which it was stamped in the days of Goethe, Schlegel, and Lessing. But its incompetency is more strikingly manifested in its reluctance to be justly severe than in any other respect. The greater portion of the criticism of our day, whatever its defects, is generous, and to the extent of the critic's abilities, truthful. In literary and theatrical criticism this is, undoubtedly, the case. The tone of dramatic criticism has made a distinct advance, and the judgments passed upon players are often thoughtful and judicious. There is really no "cabal." Seldom do we find a theatrical critic who has any but a purely critical interest in the piece he judges. It is time to have done with this class of accusation, the falsehood of which is only equalled by its cowardice.

The charge constantly brought against criticism of being anonymous is easily met. It is anonymous despite the critic, and not by his wish; for while it is no shield against those aggrieved, it prevents the public from crediting the writer with fearlessness. A dramatist or actor assailed is seldom in doubt as to who is his assailant. But when criticisms of high merit appear the public gives them almost invariably to the wrong man. No chance is there for the critic in England to build up a reputation such as was enjoyed by Saint Beuve, or such as is now possessed by M. Jules Janin. That criticism sometimes departs from its proper function and becomes a minister of private animosity is true; the journal in which the unfair attack appears is pretty sure to be one of small repute, and it is rarely, if ever, a professional critic who does the dirty work. No—all the charges brought against criticism may be dispersed, except one—that of possible incompetence. To the dramatist and to the actor the tribute of the critic is as friendly as is consistent with the maintenance of any standard of art or critical integrity. That personal associations warp at times the judgment, that defects are overlooked, short-comings hinted at instead of exposed, and the truth but faintly told, if told at all, we admit. But we doubt whether a complete overruling of influences of this kind is possible.

We do not expect the feud between artist and critic to cease, but we should gladly welcome a little more tolerance on the part of the artist with whom the critic has professionally to deal, and whose faults, as well as merits, it is his bounden duty to point out. When a writer has made his way he can dispense with criticism; but his early steps would, without such help, have been more painful. It may be human to turn against those by whose aid you have risen—but it is not commendable.

J. K.

THE DRAMA IN SPAIN.

Some living dramatists of Spain endeavour, with perseverance, talent, and occasional success, to arrest that decay which the most lenient critics are compelled to admit is a melancholy fact. "To judge from certain journals," writes Señor Cortázar, "you would imagine that every work presented upon the Madrid boards is applauded for its dramatic beauty, its poetic excellence, or its brilliant wit; and that the author is esteemed for his reputation and exceptional literary ability. Supposing such to be true, how great a stretch of imagination will be necessary to accept as a fact the notable decadence of our stage!"

Passing in review the season of 1871-2, a notice of each of the 267 productions which formed that dramatic *olla* would be wearisome and unprofitable. 6 were works in four acts, 39 in three, 15 in two, and 207 in one act; 36 were dramas, 38 zarzuelas, and the remaining 193 are classed under the head of comedies. The majority of the adaptations are from the French, some German, some Italian, and a few Catalan; the authors numbered 114: 17 of the productions were purely political—political allusions being also found in many others. Upon this same point of politics, Señor Cortázar is very severe:—

"I object to, and censure with all bitterness and severity, every piece the pabulum for which is politics: it is an element of discord between friends, amongst families, has spread misery, ruin, and desolation throughout our poor Spain, and is out of place on the stage."

A short notice of the most successful pieces may be interesting to your readers. *Galiana*, a drama founded upon the Italian of Pietro Sturbenetil, is evidently the work of an inexperienced hand. The situations are dramatic and powerful, the subject is interesting, and the writing good, although Spanish Italianised; but the capital defect is that so cleverly avoided by Zorrilla in his *El Zapatero y el Rey*, of two characters struggling without weapons, on the centre of the stage—a situation neither dramatic nor in good taste. *El Caballero de Gracia* is founded upon a tradition of the time of Phillip the II, this same chevalier being a sort of Juan Tenorio, of whom the author says:—

There is no woman born of woman who,
Rich, poor, beautiful, homely, or a hag,
He doth not importune, adore, or sigh for.

And again—

Each woman loves him at first glance,
And loses all her senses at the sight.
He cares not, be she wedded wife
Or simply maiden daughter.

Leonor is the faithful, true, high-souled woman, and Jacobo, despite all Señor Larra's poetry, a loose fish. In the *Beltraneja* and *Dona Maria Coronel*, both authors depart from historical truth, for the purpose, of course, of adding dramatic power to their productions. In both the versification is harmonious and rich, but not always sustained. These are the joint productions of Señores Echevaria and Retes; and it is difficult to assign to each his share of the beauties or defects. The Princess Juana of the former, represented as enamoured of Don Lope, is not the high-souled Juana of history, who would shrink from the slightest advance without being assured of reciprocity on the part of her lover. Elisa Boldun, the coming Siddons of the Spanish stage, insured the success of *Maria Coronel*.

Passing on to comedies—*La Caja de Pandora*, *El Novio de mi Mujer*, *La Feria de las Mujeres*, and *La Mujer Compuesta*, all pleased more or less. As set-off against the failures, Señor José Marco has achieved a marked success with *La Mujer Compuesta*, in three acts, and in verse, which, aided by the artistic acting of Matilde Díez (the Kato Terry of the Spanish stage), won unanimous approval. A critic in *La Corte* observes:—

"In these degenerate days, when we are offered a really moral play, well acted, the artist and the critic may congratulate each other on a fairly earned success."

A short résumé of the plot may not be uninteresting, as giving hope of better things for the Spanish stage under the influence of Amadéo and his consort. The comedy opens with a marriage, in place of ending with one. Enrique and his young wife, Margarita, pass through their honeymoon. The lady, prior to that event, having been amiable, bright, and full of attractions, now changes her habits, becomes acetic, locks away her jewels, dresses in black serge, abjures music, conversation, the theatre, the Prado,—thus rendering home life anything but joyous. The result is, that Enrique seeks elsewhere the distraction and amusement he should find in the society of his wife. In her dress and mode of life, Margarita is a great contrast to her sister-in-law Consuelo, and her bosom friend, Julia. Enrique is not slow to note, the difference, and his weariness becomes daily more apparent. How Margarita pales before the brilliant Julia and the elegant Consuelo! What matters it that one is inclined to coquetry, and the other to scandal?—both are charming, one making life pleasant with her wit, the other by her toilette.

This is the ground-work of the comedy, and if you fail to discover talent of a high order, it is at least not unwholesome. Other dramatists have enlarged upon the vanity of riches, the hollowness of luxury, and the inconvenience of submissiveness in woman. And although it may be said of the first two that they are more popular with modern society, the last should surely have its *locus standi* in the drama. Don Juan, the husband of Julia, has manifested a slight leaning in the direction of flirtation, and Julia, to revenge herself, feigns to become careless and prodigal. To wound her husband more deeply, she affects an attachment for Enrique. Consuelo, Margarita's sister-in-law, enlarges upon the dangers that menace her, and following her advice the neglected wife decides to change her mode of life. Casting aside humble serge, she appears in the richest silk, flies to her long-neglected music, and renewing her earlier triumphs, rescues her husband from what might become vice. Enrique renews his tenderness and love, as in happier days. Julia throws off the mask, and, after coquettishly pardoning her husband, appears what she has always been—fond, faithful, and prudent; and so the comedy ends with a dance. The acting of Matilde Diez is perfect, and the other characters being all well represented, *La Mujer Compuesta* is a legitimate success. F. W. C.

WAIFS.

Madame Arabella Goddard has left London for Boulogne-sur-mer.

Signor Randegger has written to say, that he is *not* going to America. Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams will shortly appear at the Adelphi Theatre.

Miss Ada Cavendish is likely to be the future lessee of the Olympic Theatre.

Mdlle. Drasdil will be the contralto in the Grau-Rubinstein American tour this "fall."

Mdlle. Louise Liebhardt left for America by the Havre boat, to join the Grau-Rubinstein tour, on Thursday evening.

Mr. Dion Boucicault's new play, *Babil and Bijou*, was produced at Covent Garden Theatre, on Thursday night, and was enthusiastically received.

Mr. Charles Lyall left for America, with various other eminent artists belonging to the Maretzek New York Italian opera troop, on Wednesday.

The Royalty Theatre will shortly open under Mr. Swanborough's management, with a new burlesque by Mr. Conway Edwards, called *Anne Boleyn*.

The Crystal Palace Saturday Classical Concerts—the Symphony Concerts, *par excellence*, as directed by Mr. Manns—commence again (*Dieu merci!*) in the first week of October.

The celebrated New York pianoforte manufacturer, Weber, has recently founded an establishment ("pianoforte warerooms") in Washington Street, Boston (Massachusetts).

Madame Pauline Lucca arrived in London, from Berlin, on Wednesday night. She started yesterday evening, for Liverpool, *en route* for New York—in the "Cuba" steamer (Cunard line).

Miss Clara Doria sails in the Cunard steamer, "Cuba," this day, for New York. Several lucrative engagements wait her arrival in that city, when she announces her intention of settling as a teacher and vocalist.

Among the passengers on board the Cunard steamer, "Russia," which left Liverpool for New York on Saturday last, were Signor Mario (or "Mario," as we would rather call him.)

Signor Schira left London for Milan, on Monday. The eminent musician and professor intends to pass his holidays near the Lake of Como—where, instead of being idle, he will proceed with the composition of the cantata which he has been engaged to write for the next Birmingham Festival.

A Paris journalist recently encountered a blind man playing a clarinet in the streets, whom he had seen doing the same thing some years before at St. Cloud. He asked him how he had happened to change places. "Ah, sir," answered the "blind" man, "it made me sad to look at the ruins of the war."

The Italian journals announce the death, aged 79, at Piacenza, her native city, of Benedetta Pisaroni, one of the most celebrated singers of former days. Pisaroni originally possessed a high soprano voice, but an attack of small-pox changed its character, and transformed it into a contralto of extraordinary richness and extent.

A public rehearsal for the forthcoming Norfolk and Norwich Musical Festival was held on Monday evening in St. Andrews Hall, and was attended by upwards of 1,000 persons. The choruses from *Elijah* were tried, as were choruses from the *Creation* and Mr. G. A. Macfarren's new cantata, *Outward Bound*. Mr. J. Harcourt conducted, and Dr. Bunnett presided at the organ. On Thursday in the Festival week, in addition to Sir Julius Benedict's new oratorio, Handel's Occasional Overture will be given at the commencement of the concert, and will be followed by the aria from Handel's *Theodora*, "Angels ever bright and fair," to be sung by Mdlle. Albani.

A selection of organ music is to be played on the 30th and 31st of August, and September 2nd, by Messrs. Tamplin, Lejeune, and Best, upon the new instrument made by Messrs. Bishop and Starr, for the Town Hall, Bombay. The organ, intended as a memorial of the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Bombay, in 1870, is the gift of Sir Albert Sassoon.

Signor and Mdme. Arditi leave London for Hombourg. Mdme. Adelina Patti, who is singing at the opera at Hombourg, has made a "hit" with Signor Arditi's new Tarantella (introduced in the "Lesson scene" of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), and is invariably called upon to repeat it. Mdme. Patti is also about to introduce to the public Signor Arditi's new waltz, "L'Incontro."

Dr. Lowell Mason, the widely-known composer of church music, has just died at Orange, New Jersey, aged eighty-two. Dr. Mason, the first to introduce music as a branch of public school instruction in America, was the first one upon whom the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred in America. He wrote more than fifty musical works, of one of which alone 600,000 copies have been sold.

Signora Rita Sanz, Signors Abrugnedo, Moriarni, Sparapani, Santi (the admirable chorus-master, who distinguished himself so highly at Her Majesty's Theatre and at Her Majesty's Opera, Drury Lane), together with a picked chorus of Italian singers, started from Liverpool, on Friday, by the City of London steamship to join the powerful Italian Opera Company, engaged by Mr. Max Maretzek for New York.

At the meeting of the general committee of the South Wales Choral Union, held on the 7th inst., at Aberdare, it was resolved:—"That the most cordial thanks of the committee of the South Wales Choral Union be tendered to Brinley Richards, Esq., and to Stephen Evans, Esq., for their patriotic and sympathizing conduct towards the Choral Union, in sacrificing their valuable time for the purpose of giving such a hearty welcome to the Choral Union on the occasion of its recent visit to London."

J. S. Dwight, of Boston, Massachusetts, (of all people in the world!) is quoting copiously from the book called *Music and Words*, by the Rev. Mr. Haweis. If friend Dwight came to London once more (which would greatly please the friends he made when last in England), we would undertake to persuade him, by *vinâ voce* proof, that Mr. Haweis preaches much better sermons from the pulpit than he writes essays and criticisms, in his leisure hours, on that cruelly treated art called "music." Oh Dwight! Dwight! Dwight!—how art thou transmogrified! Read, without loss of time, Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres*.

LEIPZIG.—On the 7th instant, the well-known University Vocal Association, Paulus, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary by a concert of sacred music in the University Church of St. Paul. The first piece was Mendelssohn's overture to *St. Paul*, performed by the bands of the Theatre and the Gewandhaus. Mdme. Peschka-Leutner sang the air, "Auf starkem Fittig," from Haydn's *Creation*; Herr Lauterbach played a Violin Arioso, by Rietz; Herr Grützmaier, a Violoncello Air by Bach; and Dr. Kretschmar, an Organ-Toccata, by the same composer. The choral pieces were: the *chorale*, "Wachet auf," as harmonized by Jac. Prätorius; "O bone Jesu," Palestrina; "Miserere," Orlando Lasso; Fragments from Cherubini's *Requiem*; "Agnus Dei," Jul. Otto; "Danklied," Rietz; Mendelssohn's "Ad Vesperos, Dom. xxi. p. Trinit.," "Hymn for double Chorus," Franz Schubert; and the Motet, "Verzweifle nicht," R. Schumann. The concert was followed by a grand banquet in the Schützenhaus. Professor Osterloh proposed the health of the "Emperor William, the Victorious," and of "King John, the Learned." Professor Zarneke, Dr. Weber, and Dr. Dr. Döhner, presented Dr. Langer, the Director of the Association, with a silver laurel-wreath. Dr. Ferdinand Hiller, who is an honorary member, made a speech on the relation of the Producer to the Reproducer. Other speeches followed.—On the following day, there was a concert of profane music in the new Theatre, which was crammed. With the exception of Beethoven's "Leonore Overture," No. 3, and his Triple Concerto, Op. 56 (performed by Herren Reinecke, Lauterbach, and Grützmaier), and of Schubert's "Wanderer," the programme comprised exclusively compositions by honorary members of the Association. Among them were: "Morgenhymne," M. Bruch; "Waldpsalm der Münche," and the sixth scene from *Frithjof*, Ferdinand Hiller; "Ostermorgen," for soprano, male chorus, and orchestra, and "Zur Weinlese," Georg Vierling; "Der Jäger Heimkehr," C. Reinecke; and Horace's ode, "Ad Thaliarchum," Vincenz Lachner.—A very pretty surprise was prepared for Mdme. Peschka-Leutner on her first re-appearance in *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* after her return from America. Friendly hands changed her dressing-room into an arbour of flowers. Magnificent bouquets with congratulatory cards from the first families of the town, covered the table, while on a violet velvet cushion there lay a massive silver laurel-wreath, bearing the following inscription: "To Mdme. Peschka-Leutner, our highly esteemed and universally popular artist, this wreath is respectfully offered on her return, covered with glory, from foreign lands."

BOUCICAULT'S BULL.

Concomitant with the discovery that comedies of that particular class which was in vogue some sixty years ago are gems of dramatic literature, is the opinion that when they are honoured with the revival they so richly merit as little of them should be shown as possible. This very qualified admiration denotes the plain truth that the pieces in question contain a few characters that, if well acted, are sure to be effective on the stage, but that these have been placed by their authors in an atmosphere of sentimentality, which by our fathers was considered not only harmless, but bracing, but which to the present generation seems utterly intolerable. By taking in hand that "fine old play," the younger Colman's *John Bull*, pronounced by many a British Aristarchus to be the best comedy in the language, and so reducing it that its performance occupies little more than an hour and a half, Mr. Dion Boucicault has set a pattern which future "revivers" will do well to follow. Not effected by any lingering veneration for the long-neglected idol, he has seen that the list of *dramatis personæ* comprises two parts, and two parts only, which, with our present histrionic resources, can be made to tell upon the stage. One of these is the good-humoured, scottish Irishman, Dennis Bulgruddery; the other is the model English plebeian, Job Thornbury. The truth ascertained, he has gone to work, not with the symbolical pruning-knife, but with the hatchet; he has not trimmed, but lopped. Scene after scene has been stricken down; that pink of "exquisites," the Honourable Tom Shuffleton, who used to indulge largely in a boomerang sort of satire that always hit the satirist himself, and Lady Caroline Brayman, that inimitable type of the heartless woman of fashion, are reduced to the most touching state of insignificance; while Dan, "the country boy," has become so exceedingly small that he is little more than an indication of his former self.

Nevertheless, the result of the vigorous lopping is, that the fragment of *John Bull* remaining is a very pleasant object to look upon, whereas the entire *John Bull*, whenever revived of late years, has proved a dismal failure. Mr. Dion Boucicault has often delighted the public with his delineation of Irish character, but it may be questioned whether he ever acted with more sympathetic "fun" than as Dennis Bulgruddery. There is a *vis comica* in some of George Colman's dialogue which makes one marvel how so much dreary twaddle could come from the same source; and some of his best lines are put into the mouth of Dennis. Every one of these is given with the truest humour by Mr. Boucicault, the dim consciousness that he has now and then said a good thing being inimitably droll. In the scene where, in a state of inebriety, he takes the part of Mary against his wife, he exhibits a phase of drunkenness that is utterly apart from stage convention. Alcohol and Virtue seem to have entered into a strange alliance, so that, when the latter might possibly fail, the former inspires with noble resolution.

Mr. Boucicault may be congratulated on his success in extricating from a heap of antiquated trash an amusing little play which adds one more to his list of effective parts.

VIENNA.—Herr Anton Rubinstein has probably, by this time, started for America. Besides *Hagar*, he has, during the last month, set to music a long poem, *Hekuba*, by Dr. Ludwig Goldmann. Both works will shortly be published by Barthold Senff, of Leipzig.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

DEFF AND STEWART.—"Buttercups and Daisies," by F. Archer. "The Angel at the Window," by B. Tours. "The Streamlet," and "Spring Flowers," by King Hall. "Biondina," by Charles Gounod.
HAMMOND & Co.—"Sunshine again in England," by Agnes Chamberlain. "Blumen am Wege," Nos. 1 to 4, by Gustav Lange. "A Summer's day in the Country," and "Meditation," by J. Schmuck. Six Marches, by Joseph Gung'l.
NOVELLO, EWER & Co.—The Office of the Holy Communion. Set to music by the Rev. E. B. Whyley, M.A.
DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.—"Wedding Bells." Song by W. F. Taylor; "Philomela," chanson (with French and English words), by Horton C. Allison.
ROBERT COCKS & Co.—"Hither, come hither" (the call of the fairies), trio for three sopranos, by Brinley Richards.

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PREFACE.

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